

# IN DEFENSE OF ERASMUS

By Pastor John Cereghin

## Introduction

One of the loudest and most insistent criticisms of the Authorized Version of 1611, popularly known as the King James Bible, is that its Greek Text, referred to as the Textus Receptus, is inferior to "modern" Greek texts. The attack upon the Textus Receptus centers on the one Dutch Reformation scholar responsible for publishing it, Desiderius Erasmus. Erasmus published the first Greek New Testament in 1516 (first edition, followed by four others) which was the foundation for our modern Textus Receptus, which underlies the New Testament of the AV.

The assumption of the enemies of God's Word is that, if you can somehow discredit Erasmus or his Greek text, then you can discredit the AV. These men then level their guns at Erasmus, attacking him personally and his Greek text. Then they sit back in smug satisfaction in imagining they have accomplished their goal.



But have they? By no means! Their criticisms have been carefully examined and have been found to be wanting. Every one of their attacks upon Erasmus can be easily answered. Below is an essay I wrote to answer such criticisms that were forwarded to me by an AV opponent by the name of Rick Norris. He wrote me and asked me how I could support Erasmus and his Greek Text seeing he was a humanist, a Roman Catholic and that his text was hastily prepared and fraught with errors? I answered him with the facts that Erasmus was not a good Catholic but a Reformer at heart, that a Reformation humanist was nothing like a modern humanist and his Greek text was a product of careful scholarship and was edited over a 20-year period. I grew weary at the continual stream of propaganda against Erasmus and his Greek text by these men so I decided to do my own research to answer my questions on this matter.

To help you answer these men whose "high calling" is trying to discredit the English Bible, we offer the following replies to the most common attacks based on Erasmus. These attacks are:

1. Erasmus was a Roman Catholic.
2. Erasmus' Greek Text was "hastily prepared" and "fraught with errors."
3. Erasmus did not have access to the readings of modern manuscripts.
4. Erasmus was a humanist. (1)

These are the standard accusations. Below is the refutation. If you have any additional information or if you spot a mistake, please let me know. My address is c/o Maryland Baptist Bible College, P.O. Box 66, Elkton MD 21922.

**Footnote:**

1. This material that I will present is by no means new. It is easily and readily available. Yet critics of the TR/AV choose to ignore it and rather parrot old and recycled arguments that they get from each other instead of relying on new research. Examples abound, from the writings of John R. Rice to Robert Sumner's booklet ***Bible Translations*** and others. A very recent example is cited by David Cloud in ***O Timothy***, volume 12, issue 6, on pages 19 and 20. Cloud reviews an article published by Bob Jones University in their ***Biblical Viewpoint*** (Nov. 1994) by S. E. Schnaiter, in which he simply rehashes arguments he got from someone else. Schnaiter claims that Dean Burgon was not very scholarly in his defense of the AV, that the differences between the majority and minority texts are small and unimportant and that Erasmus edited his Greek text in "great haste" from manuscripts "he happened to have on hand." Now I assume that Schnaiter is no fool, for he could have used the vast BJU library to consult the same books I did. Rather, this material is overlooked and suppressed by enemies of the AV. I would even go as far as to say "conspiracy" and "cover-up." Why do these men ignore and refuse to present this material? If I can find this material, why can't they?

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**Question #1**

**Why do you use the Textus Receptus when it was translated by a Roman Catholic, Erasmus? Wasn't Erasmus a Roman Catholic? Wouldn't this mean that the Textus Receptus and its resulting Authorized Version is a Roman Catholic translation?**

The inference is the TR and hence its subsequent translations are Roman Catholic. Yet the truth is that Erasmus may have been a professing Catholic but was not a practicing Catholic. Was Erasmus a Catholic? Yes, but so was everyone else [except the Baptistic Waldensians (see Question #16)] in this day. Erasmus was clearly a Reformer at heart. Erasmus constantly criticized the doctrinal and practical errors of Rome and its Bible, the Latin Vulgate, which he rejected. Martin Luther, an anti-Romanist, used Erasmus to translate his German New Testament. Would Luther have used a Roman Catholic text to translate a Protestant Bible? Erasmus died among Protestant friends, outside of the Catholic Church. (1)

If Erasmus was so "Catholic" and his text so "Catholic," then who were the enemies of the Roman church? And why was Erasmus' manuscript never adopted by Rome? Why did Luther refer to Erasmus' second edition as "my wife" if Erasmus was so Catholic? (2) Erasmus Greek New Testament was placed on Rome's Index of Forbidden Books by the Council of Trent, which meant that it is forbidden for Catholics to even read it without approval from their bishop upon pain of mortal sin. (3)

A Catholic writer, Hugh Pope, under an official Roman Catholic imprimatur and nihil obstat, says Erasmus was a heretic from Rome. He scoffed at images, relics, pilgrimages and Good Friday observances. Pope suggested Erasmus had serious doubts about every article of Catholic faith: the mass, confession, the primacy of the Apostolic See, clerical celibacy, fasting, transubstantiation and abstinence. (4) He also ridiculed invocation of the saints, reverence for relics and prayers to Mary. There was scarcely any superstition or abuse in the Roman Church that Erasmus did not denounce. (5) It is obvious then that Rome certainly has no desire to claim Erasmus. Erasmus was also a vocal opponent of Roman scholastic theology and of the ignorance of the monks. (6) Thus, AV critic, Doug

Kutilek, is incorrect when he says "Erasmus did not disapprove of Roman Catholic doctrine." (7) To speak then of the "Roman Catholic Erasmus" and to try to paint him as a loyal Romanist is to speak against the facts and slander Erasmus' name.

Hugh Pope continues regarding Erasmus and Rome: "He seemed to take pleasure in suggesting doubts about almost every article of Catholic teaching . . . Small wonder then that he came to be regarded as the man who paved the way for the Reformation . . ." (8)

The Pope offered to make Erasmus a cardinal but he refused (as did the martyr Savanarola), saying he would not compromise his conscience. (9) Erasmus was committed to putting the Bible into the hands of the common man and for the worldwide translation of the Bible, something no pope ever supported. (10) David Cloud maintains, "It is a historical fact that Erasmus was strong and public in his condemnation of Catholic heresies . . . Rome did brand him as an 'impious heretic' and the Pope forbade Catholics to read his works." (11) "Bigoted Catholics," according to Philip Schaff, reviled him as "Errasmus" because of his errors; "Arasmus" because he plowed up old truths and traditions; and "Erasmus" because he made an \*\*\* of himself by his writings. They even called him "Behemoth" and "Antichrist." The Sorbonne condemned 37 articles extracted from his writings in 1527. His books were burned in Spain and long after his death. (12)

The Roman Catholic Diego Lopez Zuniga wrote a 54 page essay against Erasmus entitled *Erasmii Roterodami blasphemiae et impietates (The Blasphemies and Impieties of Erasmus of Rotterdam)* in 1522. How say ye then that Erasmus was a Roman Catholic? Somebody in Rome didn't think too highly of Erasmus!

This quote from *The Life and Letters of Erasmus*, edited by J. A. Froude, also demonstrates the animosity between Erasmus and Rome:

"Erasmus had undertaken to give the book to the whole world to read for itself -- the original Greek of the Epistles and Gospel, with a new Latin Translation -- to wake up the intelligence, to show that the words had a real sense . . . It was finished at last, text and translation printed, and the living facts of Christianity, the persons of Christ and the Apostles, their history, their lives, their teachings were revealed to an astonished world. For the first time the laity were able to see, side by side, the Christianity which converted the world, and the Christianity of the Church with a Borgia pope, cardinal princes, ecclesiastical courts, and a mythology of lies. The effect was to be a spiritual earthquake. Erasmus opens with a complaint of the neglect of Scripture (in his preface and notes to each gospel), of a priesthood who thought more of offertory plates than of parchments, and more of gold than of books: of the degradation of spiritual life, and of the vain observances and scandalous practices of the orders specially called religious . . .

"His comments on Mathew 23:27 (on whited sepulchres): 'What would Jerome say could he see the Virgin's milk exhibited for money . . . the miraculous oil; the portions of the true cross, enough if they were collected to freight a later ship? Here we have the hood of St. Francis, there Our Lady's petticoat, or St. Anne's comb, or St. Thomas of Canterbury's shoes . . . and all through the avarice of priests and the hypocrisy of monks playing on the credulity of the people. Even bishops play their parts in these fantastic shows, and approve and dwell on them in their rescripts. (13)

"His comments on Matthew 24:23 (on Lo, here is Christ or there): 'I saw with my own eyes Pope Julius II, at Bologna, and afterwards at Rome, marching at the head of a triumphal procession as if he were Pompey or Caesar. St. Peter subdued the world with faith, not with arms or soldiers or military engines . . .'

"His comments on I Corinthians 14:19 (on unknown tongues): 'They chant nowadays in our churches in what is an unknown tongue and nothing else, while you will not hear a sermon once in six months telling people to amend their lives . . .'

"His comments on I Timothy 3:2 (on the husband of one wife): 'Other qualifications are laid down by St. Paul as required for a bishop's office, a long list of them. But not one at present is held essential, except this one of abstinence from marriage. Homicide, parricide, incest, piracy, sodomy, sacrilege, these can be got over, but marriage is fatal. There are priests now in vast numbers, enormous herds of them, seculars and regulars, and it is notorious that very few of them are chaste. The great proportion fall into lust and incest, and open profligacy.'

"Such are extracts from the reflections upon the doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church which were launched upon the world in the notes of the New Testament by Erasmus, some on the first publication, some added as edition followed edition . . . They were deliberate accusations attached to the sacred text, where the religion which was taught by Christ and the Apostles and the degenerate superstition which had taken its place could be contrasted side by side. Nothing was spared; ritual and ceremony, dogmatic theology . . . bishops, seculars, monks were dragged out to judgment, and hung as on a public gibbet, in the light of the pages of the most sacred of all books, published with the leave and approbation of the Pope himself . . . The clergy's skins were tender from long impunity. They shrieked from pulpit and platform . . ." (14)

A.T. Robertson calls these anti-Roman notes in Erasmus text "caustic" and they raised the ire of the priests. (15) The priests saw the danger and instead of attacking the Greek Testament and its translation, they attacked Erasmus! Since they couldn't answer him theologically or critically, they had to resort to their last gasp -- personal attack and insult of Erasmus.

Edward Lee, a staunch papist and later Archbishop of York, organized a league of Englishmen to oppose Erasmus. (16) Erasmus literally had the firebrands of hell and Rome hurled at him. They absolutely hated him because he had dared tamper with the Vulgate.

Erasmus was relatively orthodox in his doctrine, including his soteriology. He wrote in his *Treatise on Preparation for Death*:

"We are assured of victory over death, victory over the flesh, victory over the world and Satan. Christ promises us remission of sins, fruits in this life a hundredfold and therefore life eternal. And for what reason? For the sake of our merit? No indeed, but through the grace of faith which is in Christ Jesus . . . Christ is our justification . . . I believe there are many not absolved by the

priest, not having taken the Eucharist, not having been anointed, not having received Christian burial who rest in peace, while many who have had all the rites of the Church and have been buried next to the altar have gone to hell . . . Flee to His wounds and you will be safe." (17)

How "Catholic" is this? A good Catholic would tell you to flee to Mary, the mass or the sacraments, in the hour of death.

Philip Schaff, who was a closet-Catholic, calls Erasmus a "forerunner of the Reformation." He said that Protestants owed Erasmus a debt of gratitude for enabling Luther and Tyndale to make their translations. (18)

Frank Logsdon, who renounced his organizational work on the New American Standard Version, said "How could you speak against a man, claiming that he is a Roman, when he turned down the offer of a cardinalship and campaigned against monasticism, against the liturgy of the Catholic Church, and was detested by the Catholic people? Do you know one of the reasons the Jesuits came into being under Loyola? Their main project was to supplant the Erasmus text . . . Their whole aim . . . is to destroy the Erasmus text, and the Authorized Version, of course, came from the Erasmus text." (19)

Like most other Reformers, Erasmus desired to reform the Church from within. He did not desire to leave the Church. In this, his desire was similar to Luther. Erasmus never did officially leave the Church, desiring to reform it from within, but it cannot be denied that he was not a Romanist at heart.

Staunch Catholics were given to refer to Erasmus as a Lutheran at heart. They considered him and his works subversive. While Erasmus was not a Lutheran, there can be no serious or honest doubt that he was in sympathy with the main points of the Lutheran criticism of the Church. Melancthon, Luther's right hand man, was quoted once as saying, "Erasmus nobiscum est," or "Erasmus is with us." (20)

Michael Maynard, in his work *A History of the Debate Over I John 5:7-8*, sees a possible motivation for the spread of the lie and slander about Erasmus being a "good Catholic:"

"The motive behind this . . . view of Erasmus being a 'good Catholic' appears to be an attempt to retaliate (by the editors of the United Bible Society text editors, including the Jesuit Carlo Martini on its editorial board). Since its advocates (of the UBS text) can justify neither the recent (1968) inclusion of the Jesuit Carlo Martini, on the UBS editorial committee, nor their reliance on ecumenical institutes, nor Roman Catholic involvement in UBS translations, they instead attempt to create the impression of a Catholic origin of the printed Received Text . . . Meanwhile, Received Text advocates are still waiting for the fundamentalists minority text advocates to explain why they trust four liberals and a Jesuit, who is in line to become the next pope, with the identity of the New Testament." (21)

The hypocrisy of the UBS defenders (who are anti-TR and AV) then becomes clear. In an attempt to justify their reliance on the work of Jesuit Martini, they try to create a Romanist Erasmus. Their thinking is, "If you can rely on the Catholic Erasmus and his work, then we are allowed to support the work of this Jesuit Martini!" But since Erasmus was a "bad Catholic" at best, their alibi falls flat....



- For the remainder of his life [Erasmus] did not wear “the habit of the Augustinians,” nor live in a monastery. He may have been twenty when he left the convent. “In all of his bulky correspondence he never once mentioned having said the mass” (Froude, p. 21; Bainton, pp. 103, 244 et al.). “[T]here is no record that he ever exercised the priestly functions, and monasticism [monastic life - pertaining to monasteries, monks and nuns] was one of the chief objects of his attack in his lifelong assault upon the evils of the Church” (The New Schaff-Herzog, vol. IV, p. 164).
- During his theological studies at the University of Paris, “*Unruly students were flogged till the blood came.*” Both John Calvin and Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, were trained there, under the same merciless professor, Mr. Standock. Erasmus despised it; Calvin and Loyola did not see so clearly and integrated this sadistic Catholic thinking into their own theology. (This is part of the reason Erasmus could not join Calvin, who was not opposed to burning people at the stake.) “Upon his teachers in this discipline Erasmus emptied the vials of scorn,” said Bainton. Erasmus finally left the University of Paris, concluding, “*Heresy does not arise among the laity who have the scriptures in the vernacular, but among the doctors*” (Bainton, p. 35, 36, 203). He spoke of both Catholic and other theologians, “[W]hose brains are the rottenest, intellects the dullest, doctrines the thorniest, manners the brutalest, life the foulest, speech the spitefulest, hearts the blackest that I have ever encountered in the world...theologians. They are a proud, susceptible race...They live in the third heaven, adoring their own persons and disdaining the poor crawlers upon earth. They are surrounded by a bodyguard of definitions...” (Froude, The Life and Letters, pp. 70, 130). (These definitions have been embalmed in Greek lexicons and haunt the pages of today's new versions. They may even materialize in KJV churches, with the magic incantation, ‘That word a-c-t-u-a-l-l-y means...’ )

Excerpt from [IN AWE OF THY WORD](#) by G.A. Riplinger.

## Footnotes

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## **Question #2**

### **Didn't Erasmus dedicate his Greek text to the pope?**

Erasmus did dedicate his first edition Greek New Testament to Pope Leo X, but as a patron of learning and not on a theological basis. (1)

Leo also had done numerous favors for Erasmus, such as freeing him from his monastic vows and removing the disabilities of his bastardy. This Erasmus never forgot. (2)

In this day, it would have been nearly hopeless to think that a Bible or a Greek text could be accepted without the approval of the pope. Another reason why Erasmus dedicated his text to the pope was so that it would be accepted. (3)

## Footnotes

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## **Question #3**

### **Was Erasmus qualified to edit a Greek Text? Wasn't his Greek education substandard?**

There are also attacks upon Erasmus' education and preparation. Without a doubt, Erasmus was the most brilliant of the Reformation-era scholars. Every king wanted him in his court for the intellectual prestige he would bring. Yet charges abound that Erasmus was not very proficient in the Greek. This is not true for Erasmus had the best Greek education that could be had in 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe. He spent most of 1506 improving his Greek with study in Bologna, Rome, Florence and Padua under the best Greek teacher of the day. (1) In 1505, he edited Valla's Annotations on the New Testament. Some of his Greek learning may have been individual, but not all of it. It is difficult to imagine a man of Erasmus' talents and scholarship, who was dedicated to a study of the Greek classics, being deficient in his knowledge of Greek!

Another attack against Erasmus was that he was not proficient in Hebrew. But this is an unimportant point. Why would he need to be when he was interested in Greek and Latin classics and New Testament manuscripts? Erasmus never tried to translate the Old Testament, so why would he need to study Hebrew?

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#### **Question #4**

##### **Wasn't Erasmus' Greek text "hastily prepared" and "fraught with errors?"**

The main complaint against Erasmus' Greek text is that it was prepared "hastily" and that he had only a few late manuscripts to work with. Again, these statements need to be clarified. His first edition was done hastily, but not because Erasmus was careless in his work, but because he had to meet the deadline established by his publisher. (1) He finished the work in about a year, which is a testament to his vast scholarship in that he was able to complete such a project in so short a time.

If Erasmus' first Greek edition was done in haste, the four later editions were not! Erasmus spent the rest of his life (20 years) editing, revising and correcting that "hastily done" first edition. Besides, most first editions have printer's errors and mistakes in them that are corrected in later editions. The errors in Erasmus' first edition were of a minor nature anyway. (2)

Yet on his "errors," Erasmus wrote "I did my best with the New Testament, but it provoked endless quarrels. Edward Lee (Archbishop of York) pretended to have discovered 300 errors. They appointed a commission, which professed to have found bushels of them. Every dinner table rang with the blunders of Erasmus. I required particulars and could not have them." (3)

The point is the first edition may have been somewhat careless, but so what? Nobody used that first edition for any translation purposes and nothing was translated from that first edition. Luther used a corrected and improved second edition to translate his German New Testament, not the first. Let the enemies of the AV name one translation of any importance that was based solely on the first edition of Erasmus.

The Stephanus text, translated by Robert Estienne (Stephanus), third edition, which is part of the TR/AV stream, was translated from Erasmus' 4th and 5th editions, not the first.

Theodore Beza produced 9 editions of the Greek New Testament between 1565 and 1604. The most important are the 1565, 1582, 1588-9 and 1598 editions. Beza's texts differ little from Stephanus' 4th edition of 1551. The AV translators made large use of Beza's editions 1588-9 and 1598. In 1624, the Elzevir brothers published a text based on Beza's 1565 edition. (4)

We thus agree with Dean Burgon, who says, "to describe the haste with which Erasmus produced the first published edition of the NT, to make sport about the copies which he employed, all this kind of thing is the preceding of one who seeks to mislead his readers to throw dust in their eyes, to divert their attention from the problems actually before them." (5) The AV is not affected by that first edition at all. To whine about the first edition and then try to somehow tie the AV in with it is dishonest scholarship and a smokescreen in an attempt to obscure the facts.

### Footnotes

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### **Question # 5**

**Did Erasmus have access to modern manuscripts as did modern translators? If he did, did he make use of them?**

Erasmus had access to most of the same set of manuscripts as did modern translators with the obvious exception of Codex Sinaiticus, which was not rescued from the trash can at St. Catherine's monastery until the mid-19th century.

Robert Sumner, an opponent of the AV, is only partially correct when he states, "Erasmus himself had no knowledge of the Alexandrian manuscripts. The Sinaiticus was not discovered at the monastery of St. Catherine's on Mt Sinai until the mid 19th century (that's true, although Erasmus certainly had access to the Sinaitic-type readings) and the Vaticanus, while in the Vatican library at Rome since about the 15th century, was not available for use by outsiders until the dawn of the 20th century." (1) That's false!

Erasmus did have access to Codex B readings (2) and rejected them because he knew how corrupt they were. After all, B is the Pope's manuscript, and since Erasmus was anti-Catholic, he rejected it. Paulus Bombasius discovered the neglected Codex B in the Vatican library in 1521 and in June of that year sent Erasmus its readings from I John 4:1-3 and I John 5:7. (3)

These same readings of Sinaiticus and Vaticanus were very much before the scholars in the 1611 AV as represented in the Latin Vulgate. Erasmus was a personal friend of Leo X (from his earlier days) and had access to every library in Europe (because of his reputation as a scholar), including the Vatican. Erasmus had access to Vaticanus if he wanted it. He didn't need the manuscript itself because Paulus Bombasius, who was in Rome, was sending him B readings. (4) Its readings were then known as early as the 17th century. Sumner is just plain wrong to say that no one had access to B before the 20th century.

Erasmus was furnished with 365 readings of B by Sepulveda, who was in possession of them as early as 1521. (5) Frederick Kenyon points out that the preface and dedication to Ximenes' text state that the text was derived from manuscripts loaned by Leo X from the Vatican library. (6) If Ximenes has these manuscripts made available to him, then



certainly must have Erasmus (especially if he was such a "good Catholic" as his enemies claim!)

Again! The controversy over I John 5:7 forced an appeal to Codex B in 1522! (7) So what does Sumner mean when he said no one had access to it at this time? How could it be introduced into a 1522 controversy over I John 5:7 unless people knew of its readings? When Cardinal Ximenes was preparing his Greek New Testament in the mid-1510's, he had access to Codex B. If he had such access then so certainly must have Erasmus. (8)

The AV 1611 translators also had the readings of Codex B before them and rejected them as did Erasmus. Neither was ignorant of them. Erasmus also had access to Codex D, Codex Bezae but also rejected it. The AV translators also had these variant readings and rejected them.

In 1675, John Fell put out a Greek text based on the Elzevir 1633 text with variant readings for Codex B. (9) If "no one had access to Codex B until the 20th century," as Sumner wrongly insists, how did Fell get his B readings?

### Footnotes

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### **Question #6**

**Was Erasmus familiar with the critical problems and the variant readings in the manuscripts?**

Yes, Erasmus was very well informed concerning the variant readings. Erasmus, in his writings and research, dealt with such problem passages as:

1. The closing of the Lord's Prayer -- Matthew 6:13.
2. The interview of the rich young man with Jesus -- Matthew 19:17-22.
3. The ending of Mark -- Mark 16:9-20. He defended the traditional ending. (1)
4. The angelic song -- Luke 2:14.
5. The omission of the angel, agony and bloody sweat -- Luke 22:43,44.
6. The woman taken in adultery -- John 7:53-8:11. He defended its inclusion. (2)
7. The mystery of Godliness -- I Timothy 3:16. (3)

Through his study of Jerome and other Fathers, Erasmus was well-versed in the variant readings. (4) He edited and published works of Jerome, Cyprian, Pseudo-Arnobius, Hilarius, Irenaeus, Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom, Basil and Origen (5) showing he would have been familiar with their Scriptural quotations. In 1505, he edited Valla's *Annotations on the New Testament*, which was a pioneer work for Biblical criticism."

### Footnotes

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### **Question #7**

**What about Erasmus' spiritual state? Was he a spiritual man?**

Erasmus never recorded any profound religious convictions or experience in his own life. (1) Luther saw the weakness and spiritual poverty of Erasmus, but this remark may have been influenced by Luther's opposition to Erasmus' position on the free will of man, over which Luther bitterly attacked Erasmus. (2) But some of Erasmus' writings are highly spiritual. Tyndale thought much of his *Enchiridon (Manual of a Christian Soldier)* and translated it into English. Enchiridon was a short, handy, Scripture-based call to Christian morality in lay people that was moderately critical of practices of the Church. Tyndale also thought much of Erasmus' *Treatise on Preparation for Death*. (3)

Erasmus did write an interesting passage in the Preface to his Greek Testament which shows a reverence and love for Scripture that surpasses the average textual critic:

"These holy pages will summon up the living image of His mind. They will give you Christ Himself, talking, healing, dying, rising, the whole Christ in a word; they will give Him to you in an intimacy so close that He would be less visible to you if He stood before your eyes." (4)

This passage again reveals the anti-Romanism of Erasmus. No Romanist looks for Christ in the Scriptures. They look for Him in the sacraments or in the rituals of the Church. No Romanist has a high love for Scripture, but Erasmus clearly did.

#### Footnotes

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### **Question #8**

#### **Wasn't Erasmus a humanist?**

Here is a major attack and a very deceptive one. Was he a humanist? Not by our standards but, in Renaissance meaning, was simply one who studied the classics, classical culture and education. Andrew Brown, of the Trinitarian Bible Society, gives the proper definition of a humanist in this context:

"Erasmus was a thoroughgoing 'Christian humanist' from his youth to his death. The use of the word 'humanist' in the Renaissance and Reformation period does not in any way share the atheistic connotations which that word now has in popular usage. A 'humanist' in that period was simply someone who was interested in classical literature, culture and education, as a means of attaining a higher standard of civilized life. Stephanus, Calvin and Beza were all humanists in this sense, and it is these 'humanist' ideals which have largely shaped Western culture in the succeeding centuries, blended with the teachings of the Christian Gospel." (1)

There is nothing wrong with this kind of humanism! Edward Hills also defines Renaissance humanism:

"The humanistic view was well represented by the writings of Laurentius Valla (1405-57), a famous scholar of the Italian renaissance. Valla emphasized the importance of language. According to him the decline of civilization in the dark ages was due to the decay of the Greek and Latin languages. Hence, it was only through the study of classical literature that the glories of ancient Greece and Rome could be recaptured. Valla also wrote a treatise on the

Latin Vulgate, comparing it with certain Greek New Testament manuscripts which he had in his possession. Erasmus, who from his youth had been an admirer of Valla, found a manuscript of Valla's treatise in 1504 and had it printed the following year. In this work, Valla favored the Greek New Testament over the Vulgate. The Latin text often differed from the Greek, he reported. Also, there were omissions and additions in the Latin translation, and the Greek wording was generally better than that of the Latin." (2)

DeLamar Jensen, in his *Reformation Europe*, defines Christian humanism as "emphasizing historical study and a 'return to sources,' meaning the Bible. They placed more devotion to Scripture than did the Italian humanists." (3)

Renaissance humanism was decidedly anti-Romanist. Europe was still emerging from the Satanic millennium (500-1500) in which Rome ruled Europe with an iron hand. Culture and education had suffered under Rome and the humanists were dedicated to reviving them.

### Footnotes

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### **Question #9**

#### **What translations used the Erasmus text?**

Translations from Erasmus:

1. John Tyndale (1)
2. Martin Luther used Erasmus' second edition. (2)
3. All English Bibles of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century were based on Erasmus; text. (3)
4. French versions of Lefevre and Olivetan 1534 and 1535
5. Dutch version by Biestkens 1558
6. Swedish Uppsala Bible by Laurentius 1541
7. Spanish Bible by Cassiodoro de Reyna in 1569
8. Danish Bible by Christian III in 1550
9. Czech version of 1602
10. Italian version by Diodati in 1607 (4)
11. Welsh New Testament of 1563 (5)

### Footnotes

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### **Question #10**

#### **Why did Erasmus reject the Vulgate?**

That Erasmus rejected the Vulgate is a historical fact. There are several reasons why he rejected it. He detected the 4<sup>th</sup> century corruption of the Alexandrian manuscripts on which the Vulgate was based, including the Vaticanus. He also opposed the obvious Roman bias in the translation of various passages. (1)

To oppose the Vulgate was a very un-Romanist thing to do in this day. "To question the fidelity of the Vulgate was a crime of the greatest magnitude in the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church." (2) A good Catholic of the Reformation era would not have dared to question or tinker with the Vulgate, but Erasmus, the "bad Catholic" did and was condemned for it.

### Footnotes

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### **Question #11**

**How many editions did Erasmus' Greek text go through?**

Five editions:

#### **I. First Edition -- 1516**

- A. Done hurriedly
- B. Erasmus not satisfied with it. (1)
- C. Not used by any translator nor is any translation based on it.
- D. This edition sold out in 3 years. (2)

#### **II. Second Edition -- 1519**

- A. A revision of the first edition in both the Greek and Hebrew
- B. About 400 changes from first edition but still suffered from many typos.  
Considering the state of printing technology of the day, typos were to be expected in any publication.
- C. Also used:
  - 1. Codex Aureus loaned to him by the King of Hungary
  - 2. Two manuscripts from the Austin Priory of Corsidonk
  - 3. A Greek manuscript borrowed from the Monastery at Mt. Saint Agnes. (3)

D. Luther used his second edition for his New Testament, although not exclusively.

#### **III. Third Edition -- 1522**

- A. Included I John 5:7, due to P61
- B. Used by Tyndale
- C. The basis for Stephanus' First Edition of 1546.

#### **IV. Fourth Edition -- 1527**

- A. 3 Columns -- the Greek, the Latin Vulgate and his own Latin translation
- B. Used 7 manuscripts including the readings in the Complutensian Polyglot. (4)

#### **V. Fifth Edition -- 1535**

- A. Omitted the Vulgate
- B. Nearly identical with the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> editions of Stephanus; differs little from his 4<sup>th</sup> edition. (5)

- C. The AV can be traced from this edition through Stephanus, not through the "hastily done" first edition.
- D. The new and revised printings went through a total of 69 printings before Erasmus died. (6)

### Footnotes

\* \* \*

### **Question #12**

#### **Didn't Erasmus only have a few late manuscripts to work with?**

The usual complaint, voiced by Doug Kutilek, an opponent of the AV, goes something like this: "Erasmus had the feeblest of manuscripts. He chiefly used one manuscript from the Gospels from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and one manuscript of Acts and the Epistles also from the 12<sup>th</sup> century . . . It was hastily produced . . . There is no ground whatsoever for accepting the Textus Receptus as the ultimate in precisely representing the original text of the New Testament . . . It was in fact the most rudimentary and rustic, at best only a provisional text . . . The Greek texts of Griesbach, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Alford and Westcott and Hort were . . . a great improvement over the text of Erasmus because they more accurately presented the text of the New Testament in the form it came from the pens of the apostles." (1) This is very inaccurate and misleading.

What of the manuscripts he used? Erasmus was ever at work, ever collecting, comparing, publishing. He classified the Greek manuscripts and read the Fathers. By his travels he was brought into contact with all the intellectual currents of his time. (2) He looked for manuscripts everywhere during his travels and he borrowed them from everyone he could. His text was mainly based on the Basel manuscripts, but included readings from others to which he had access. He had collated many Greek manuscripts of the NT and was surrounded by all the commentaries and translations by the writings of Origen, Cyprian, Ambrose, Basil, Chrysostom, Cyril, Jerome and Augustine. (3) Erasmus had access to Codex Vaticanus, but rejected its readings that were at variance with the Byzantine text. He also had access to D, Codex Bezae, but also rejected it. (4) The AV translators also had these variant readings and rejected them. (5) The readings of these much boasted manuscripts recently made available are largely those of the Vulgate. The Reformers knew of these readings and rejected them, as well as the Vulgate. (6) The pedigree of Erasmus' "late minuscule manuscripts" thus date back to antiquity. (7) The text Erasmus chose had an outstanding history in the Greek, Syrian and Waldensian churches. (8)

The texts used by Erasmus for his first edition:

1. 1 - 11<sup>th</sup> century, contained the Gospels, Acts, Epistles. Erasmus did not rely very much on 1 because it read too much like Codex B/Vaticanus. (9)
2. 2 - 15<sup>th</sup> century, contained the Gospels.
3. 2ap - 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century, contained Acts and the Epistles. Erasmus depended upon 2 and 2ap because they were the best and most accurate texts. (10)
4. 4ap - 15<sup>th</sup> century, containing Revelation.



Erasmus mainly used 2 and *2ap*, occasionally used 1 and *4ap*. (11) Erasmus may have had as many as 10 manuscripts at his disposal, 4 from England, 5 at Basle and one loaned to him by John Reuchlin. (12)

Thomas Strouse mentions that the earliest of his manuscripts went back to the 5<sup>th</sup> century, "advisedly." (13) Bishop Charles John Ellicott, Chairman of the Revision Committee, said about the Received Text:

"The manuscripts which Erasmus used differ, for the most part, only in small and insignificant details from the bulk of the cursive manuscripts. The general character of their text is the same. By this observation the pedigree of the Received Text is carried up beyond the individual manuscripts used by Erasmus . . . That pedigree stretches back to remote antiquity. The first ancestor of the Received Text was at least contemporary with the oldest of our extant manuscripts, if not older than any one of them." (14)

So the question is not, "How old were those manuscripts that Erasmus used?" but rather whether those "late manuscripts" accurately preserve the originals. We state the Erasmus manuscripts were part of that Traditional stream of manuscripts that have always been accepted by God's people. The age of the individual manuscripts is not important, but rather their accuracy in preserving the older manuscripts which contained the very Word of God.

#### Footnotes

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### **Question #13**

#### **Did Erasmus do any other translation work?**

Yes. In 1505, he made his own Latin translation of the New Testament while at Oxford. (1) In 1524, he published paraphrases and comments on the gospels and epistles which were widely received. (2)

#### Footnotes

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### **Question #14**

#### **Why did Erasmus insert I John 5:7,8 into his text? Is there sufficient manuscript evidence to support it?**

Yes, there is overwhelming evidence for it. We may say indeed that if anyone doubts whether I John 5:7,8 belongs in Scripture, they are wholly ignorant of the textual support in favor of it. First John 5:7,8 is an integral part of Scripture.

The earliest references to it would be Tertullian (160-230), Cyprian (200-258), Priscillian (d. 385), Cassiodorus (480-570), Augustine (5<sup>th</sup> century), Athanasius (4<sup>th</sup> century) and Jerome (4<sup>th</sup> century). (1) It appears in the Vulgate. (2) It also appears in Manuscript 61 and Codex Ravianus. Stephanus found it in 9 of his 16 manuscripts. (3)

Its attack and deletion from some manuscripts no doubt arises from the heresies in the early church, especially Arians. Those who oppose the inclusion of I John 5:7 are supporting the Unitarians and Jehovah Witnesses while ignoring the overwhelming mass of manuscript evidence.

Erasmus' role in the debate over these verses had been distorted by enemies of the AV. The standard position that liberals assume reads something as follows, given by AV-critic James White:

"When the first edition of Erasmus' work came out in 1516 . . . (I John 5:7,8) was not in the text for a very simple reason: it was not found in any Greek manuscript of I John that Erasmus had examined. Instead, the phrase was found only in the Latin Vulgate. Erasmus rightly did not include it in the first or second editions. The note in the *Annotations* simply said, 'In the Greek codex I find only this about the threefold testimony: 'because there are three witnesses, spirit, water and blood.' ' His reliance upon the Greek manuscripts caused quite a stir . . . Since Erasmus had promised, in his response to Edward Lee, to include the passage should a Greek manuscript be found that contained it, he was constrained to insert the phrase in the third edition when presented with an Irish manuscript that contained the disputed phrase." (4)

This is furthered by Stewart Custer of Bob Jones University:

"Now Erasmus made a rash promise. He said, 'If you can show me a Greek manuscript that has the text in it, I will print it there' . . . They went back and summoned their scribes and got them to translate the Latin Vulgate into Greek and put that verse in. (It) came right back to him. The ink was hardly dry on the manuscript . . . those two manuscripts are 61 . . . the date is 16<sup>th</sup> century, the time of Erasmus. The other one is 629 . . . Those are the only two manuscripts out of those 5000 that have verse 7 in it . . . Told him frankly that if he didn't put that verse in, they'd excommunicate him. He, being a good Roman Catholic, put it in." (5)

Both White and Custer are in error! Now for the facts:

1. On the "fact" that Erasmus made a rash promise, this was demonstrated to be false. This remark is one of the cherished legends about the history of New Testament scholarship. It is no more than a legend. Erasmus did not put the verses in his third edition on the basis of any supposed promise to Edward Lee. (6) Even Bruce Metzger admitted that Erasmus' "promise" needs to be corrected in the light of the research of H.J. de Jonge, a specialist in Erasmian studies, who finds no explicit evidence that supports this frequently made assertion. (7)
2. Was the ink hardly dry on 61, as Custer claimed? Erasmus didn't see it until a year after it was produced. Custer simply exaggerated. (8)
3. What of Custer's claim that there were only 2 manuscripts that contained the verse? R.E. Brown said a year earlier than Custer (1982) that there were 8 manuscripts. And it wasn't "5000" manuscripts as Custer claimed for, as of 1982, only 498 Greek manuscripts had been examined and in eight of them, the verses are found. (9) How could Custer assume the other 4500 manuscripts did not have the verses?

4. Was Erasmus threatened with excommunication? No evidence exists of it (10) because by the time of the third edition, he had found sufficient evidence to include it. Erasmus initially defended his omission of the verses as late as October, 1524. He had changed his views sometime between 1522-1527. (11)

### Footnotes

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### **Question #15**

#### **Why did Erasmus insert some Vulgate readings into his text?**

This was done because those readings simply happened to be the correct reading. As corrupt as the Vulgate is, it is not entirely correct. Occasionally it is correct. Edward Hills lists the major Vulgate readings in the Erasmus text as:

1. Matthew 10:8
2. Matthew 27:35
3. John 3:25
4. Acts 8:37
5. Acts 9:5,6
6. Acts 20:28
7. Romans 16:25-27
8. I John 5:7 (1)

This fact is not as damaging as it may sound. These Vulgate readings do not make the TR a Catholic manuscript. After all, the modern Catholic translations (such as the Jerusalem Bible or the New American Bible) often agree with the Authorized Version. Does this make those Catholic translations Protestant? Does it make the AV a Catholic Bible? Of course not. Generally speaking, the various translations will agree among themselves more often than not. The issue is over the places where they disagree against the AV!

### Footnote

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### ***In Summation:***

1. Erasmus was not a practicing Roman Catholic, but had the heart of a Reformer. We realize he never formally "joined" the Reformation, but was in sympathy with much of it.
2. Erasmus was not a humanist in the modern sense of the word.
3. Erasmus' "hastily prepared" first edition is totally irrelevant to the discussion, since it was not the basis for any other Greek text except his own 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, nor was it used for any translation.
4. Erasmus had plentiful and ample manuscript evidence and access to the Alexandrian readings and of Codex B.
5. Erasmus, through his study of the patristic writings, was well-versed in the variant readings, which have changed little over the centuries.

Our faith in the superiority of the Textus Receptus and the Authorized Version remains intact and unshaken. We remain confident that our position for these traditional

manuscripts is correct and is the true historical position that ought to be taken. The enemies of the AV have been unable to validate their charges and complaints against the AV and the TR.

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Frank Logsdon, "From the NASV to the KJV," *The Baptist Challenge*, March, 1992.

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Thomas Strouse, "The 19th Century Baptists, Bible Translations and Bible Societies," *Tabernacle Baptist Theological Journal*, Summer, 1994, Vol. 1, No. 2.



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Benjamin Wilkinson, *Our Authorized Version Vindicated*.

*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1949.

## FOOTNOTES

### Question #1

1. David Cloud, *Myths About the King James Bible: Erasmus was a Humanist*. Oak Harbor WA: Way of Life Literature, 1986, 1993, p. 32.
2. Michael Maynard, *A History of the Debate Over I John 5:7,8*. Tempe AZ: Comma Publications, 1995, p. 327. Despite Luther's support for the Erasmus text, Luther was no personal friend of Erasmus, mainly because of their differing views on free will.
3. Samuel Gipp, *The Answer Book*. Shelbyville TN: Bible and Literature Missionary Foundation, 1989, p. 153 and Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization: Part VI - The Reformation*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957, p. 285 and Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church: Volume VII - The German Reformation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1910, 1970, p. 415.
4. Hugh Pope, *English Versions of the Bible*. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1952, p. 105 and Schaff, p. 413.
5. John Hurst, *History of the Christian Church, Vol. 2*. New York: Eaton and Mains, 1900, p. 107.
6. John McClintock and James Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. 3. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1891, p. 278.
7. Doug Kutilek, "Erasmus and His Greek New Testament." *Biblical Evangelist*, October 1, 1985.
8. Pope, p. 105.
9. Cloud, p. 16 and Benjamin Wilkinson, "Our Authorized Version Vindicated," cited by David Otis Fuller, ed. *Which Bible?* Grand Rapids International Publications, 1970, 1975, p. 225.
10. Gipp, p. 151.
11. Cloud, pp. 16, 21.
12. Schaff, pp. 414-15.
13. Durant, p. 284.
14. J. A. Froude, *Life and Letters of Erasmus*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894, pp. 119-27.
15. A. T. Robertson, *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1925, p. 18.
16. Cloud, p. 22.
17. Roland Bainton, *Erasmus of Christendom*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969, pp. 68-70, 269-70.
18. Schaff, pp. 402-3.
19. Frank Logsdon, "From the NASV to the KJV," *The Baptist Challenge*, March 1992, p. 11.
20. Maynard, p. 327.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 329.

22. David Cloud, *For Love of the Bible: The Battle for the King James Version and the Received Text From 1800 to Present*. Oak Harbor, WA: Way of Life Publications, 1995, p. 33.

#### Question #2

1. Samuel Macauley Jackson, ed. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. 4. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1909, p. 165.
2. Durant, p. 286.
3. Robert Sargent, *Landmarks of English Bible: Manuscript Evidence*. Oak Harbor WA: Bible Baptist Church Publications, n.d., p. 154.

#### Question #3

1. McClintock and Strong, Vol. 3, p. 277.

#### Question #4

1. Edward Hills, *The King James Version Defended*. Des Moines: The Christian Research Press, 1956, 1988, p. 106.
2. Ibid. Kurt Aland (p. 4) adds that the errors in the first edition were due to typesetting errors, not to errors in the text.
3. Benjamin Wilkinson, "Our Authorized Version Vindicated" in *True or False?*, David Otis Fuller, Grand Rapids International Publications, p. 227.
4. Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1968, pp. 105-6.
5. John William Burgon, "The Revision Revised" in *True or False?*, p. 132.

#### Question #5

1. Robert Sumner, "Dear Abner!" *Biblical Evangelist*, November 1, 1992. During all the years of his editorship, Sumner never came out with a strong public stand for the AV and the TR and against the other Greek manuscripts and English translations. Instead, Sumner continually ridiculed the scholars who held to the historic position of defending the AV and hired out men like Doug Kutilek to openly attack the AV and TR. Sumner's profession that he is "for" the AV rings hollow when one reads his writings. And one must wonder why Sumner appeals to men like Dwight Moody, R.A. Torrey or John R. Rice to support his denial of the superiority of the AV when none of these men were textual scholars. Had Sumner never read Scrivener, Hills, Hodges, Burgon, Fuller, Miller or Waite?
2. Thomas Strouse, "The 19th Century Baptists, Bible Translations and Bible Societies." *Tabernacle Baptist Theological Journal*, Summer, 1994, Vol., I, No. 2, p. 7.
3. Michael Maynard, *A History of the Debate Over I John 5:7,8*. Tempe AZ: Comma Publications, 1995, p. 75.
4. David Cloud, *Myths About the King James Bible: Reformation Editors Lacked Sufficient Manuscript Evidence*. Way of Life Literature: Oak Harbor WA, 1993, p. 10.
5. Frederick Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament for the Use of the Biblical Student*, ed. Edward Miller, 2 volumes. London: George Bell and Sons, 1894, 2:226, cited by William Grady, *Final Authority*, Schereville, IN: Grady Publications, 2003, page 113 and David Cloud, *Myths About the King James*

*Bible*, op. cit., p. 9. Also Frederick Kenyon, *Our Bible*, page 133, cited in Benjamin Wilkinson, "Our Authorized Version Vindicated," cited by David Otis Fuller, ed. *Which Bible?* page 225. Maynard says, "A good Catholic would honor the 365 Vaticanus readings collected by J.G. Sepulveda, which agreed with the Vulgate. But Erasmus rejected these (p. 319). How could Erasmus reject Vaticanus readings unless he had them to reject? Maynard says on page 88 that Sepulveda supplied Erasmus with these readings because he was opposed to the manuscripts Erasmus was using to translate and edit his Greek text and was trying to influence Erasmus away from those manuscripts. Erasmus had these B readings to use for his 5th edition but rejected every single reading.

6. Donald Brake, "The Preservation of the Scriptures," cited in David Otis Fuller, ed. *Counterfeit or Genuine?* Grand Rapids International Pub., 1975, 1978, p. 203.
7. Edward Miller, *A Guide to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, Collingswood, NJ: Dean John Burgon Society, 1886, 1979, p. 9.
8. Kurt and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 4.
9. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 107.

#### Question #6

1. Gipp, *The Answer Book*, p. 151.
2. Ibid.
3. Cloud, *Myths About the King James Bible: Reformation Editors Lacked Sufficient Manuscript Evidence*, p. 12 and Strouse, *Tabernacle Baptist Theological Journal*, Summer, 1994, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 7.
4. Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, pp. 198-99.
5. Hills, p. 196 and *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1949, "Erasmus, Desiderius" in Vol. 8, p. 678.

#### Question #7

1. McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. 3, p. 278.
2. Ibid. Erasmus was not in the Calvinist branch of the Reformation, but held to the free will of man, over which Luther violently assailed him.
3. David Cloud, *Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible and Christianity*, Oak Harbor, WA: Way of Life Literature, 1993, p. 137.
4. T. Robertson, *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1925, p. 54.

#### Question #8

1. David Cloud, *Myths About the King James Bible: Erasmus Was a Humanist*, Way of Life Literature, Oak Harbor, WA, 1986, 1993, p. 24.
2. Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, p. 196.
3. DeLamar Jensen, *Reformation Europe*, Lexington MA: D.C. Heath, 1981.

#### Question #9

1. David Beale, *A Pictorial History of Our English Bible*, Greenville: Bob Jones University Press, 1982, p. 17.
2. Ibid., p. 65.
3. Ibid., p. 67

4. Grady, *Final Authority: A Christian's Guide to the King James Bible*, p. 131.
5. John Davies, *A History of Wales*. London: Penguin Press, 1990, p. 243. The Welsh are believed to be among the earliest national groups to embrace Christianity and may rightly be considered to be Baptistic. As early as 40 or 50 AD, Baptistic Christianity may have been established in Wales. The Welsh have a long and glorious spiritual history. As a result, they would have a good understanding about manuscripts and doctrine. The Welsh Church has accepted the traditional Greek text as the true New Testament text. Davies, echoing the belief of the translators of the value of the Erasmus text, says it was "based upon the most correct texts of the Greek Testament as they were established by the tradition of biblical scholarship initiated by Erasmus in 1516."

#### Question #10

1. Gipp, *The Answer Book*, p. 151.
2. Andrew Miller, *Miller's Church History*, Bible Truth Publishers, 1980, p. 696.

#### Question #11

1. Bainton, *Erasmus of Christendom*, p. 133.
2. Durant, *The Story of Civilization: Part VI -- The Reformation*, p. 285.
3. Donald Brake, "The Preservation of the Scriptures," cited in David Otis Fuller, ed. *Counterfeit or Genuine?*, p. 204.
4. Bainton, p. 133.
5. Brake, p. 203.
6. Durant, p. 285.

#### Question #12

1. Cloud, *Myths About the King James Bible: Reformation Editors Lacked Sufficient Manuscripts Evidence*, pp. 4, 5. For Kutilek to say that the work of Westcott and Hort is an improvement over the work of Erasmus, and all those who preceded him in the remnant line of Christianity back to apostolic days, exposes Kutilek for the liberal that he is.
2. Ibid., pp. 6, 7.
3. Ibid., p. 8.
4. Ibid., p. 9.
5. Ibid., p. 10.
6. Ibid., p. 11.
7. Ibid., p. 13.
8. Ibid.
9. Sargent, *Landmarks of English Bible: Manuscript Evidence*, p. 155.
10. Ibid., pp. 155-56.
11. Cloud, *Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible and Christianity*, p. 137.
12. Brake, "The Preservation of the Scriptures," cited in David Otis Fuller, ed. *Counterfeit or Genuine?* p. 204.
13. Strouse, "The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baptists, Bible Translations and Bible Societies." *Tabernacle Baptists Theological Journal*, Summer, 1994, Vol. 1., No. 2, p. 7.
14. Charles John Ellicott, *The Revisers and the Greek Text of the New Testament of the New Testament*, by Two Members of the New Testament Company, 1882, pp. 11, 12, cited by Cloud in *For Love of the Bible*, p. 52.

## Question #13

1. Edward Hills, *Believing Bible Study*. Des Moines: Christian Research Press, 1967, pp. 191-93.
2. Hurst, p. 108.

## Question #14

1. David Harrowar, *A Defense of the Trinitarian System*. Utica: William Williams, 1922, p. 44.
2. Ibid., p. 48.
3. Ibid., p. 36.
4. James White, *The King James Only Controversy*, Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1995, pp. 60-61.
5. Stewart Custer, debate on Westcott-Hort Text vs. Textus Receptus, October 11, 1983 at Marquette Manor Baptist Church, Schaumburg IL, cited by Maynard, p. 325.
6. Maynard, pp. 302, 325.
7. Ibid., p. 282, cites Bruce Metzger's book *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration*.
8. Ibid., p. 325.
9. Ibid., pp. 325-26. The 8 manuscripts are 61, 629, 918, 2318, 88vl, 221vl, 429vl, 636vl. That list came from Metzger (ibid., p. 268)
10. Ibid., p. 326
11. Ibid., p. 89.

## Question #15

1. Cited by Sargent, *Landmarks of English Bible: Manuscript Evidence*, p. 156.

## — Little known facts about Erasmus and the Scriptures —

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erasmus was surrounded with Bible manuscripts from his childhood in the 1460s, until the publication of his Greek Text in 1516. This is over 40 years! He worked for a dozen years on the text itself. "The preparation had taken years" (Durant, p. 283).</li> <li>• As early as 1505, Erasmus wrote to a friend, "<i>I shall sit down to Holy Scripture with my whole heart, and devote the rest of my life to it...[A]ll these three years I have been working entirely at Greek, and have not been playing with it</i>" (Froude, <i>The Life and Letters</i>, p. 87).</li> <li>• He began working directly on the text much before 1507. Froude wrote that years before the text appeared, it was being prepared. "He had been at work over the Greek MSS. for many years. The work was approaching completion" (Froude, <i>The Life and Letters</i>, p. 93).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critics often assert that 'Erasmus did not have the manuscripts we have today.' In fact, he had access to every reading currently extant, and rejected those matching the Catholic Vulgate (and the TNIV, NIV ESV, HCSB, and NASB today).</li> <li>• "It is indisputable that he was acquainted with every variety which is known to us; having distributed them into two principal classes, one of which corresponds with the Complutensian edition, the other with the Vatican manuscript..." "ERASMUS...published an edition, which corresponds with the text which has been since discovered to prevail in the great body of Greek manuscripts" (Nolan, pp. 413, 419).</li> <li>• Kenneth W. Clark, the scholar who has examined more Greek manuscripts than most, admits, "WE SHOULD NOT attribute to Erasmus the creation of a 'received text,' but</li> </ul> |
|---|---|



- Frederick Nolan, writing in 1815, states, In addition to the manuscripts which Erasmus owned or had seen himself, he gathered readings from the whole of Europe through his broad friendships. He noted, *"I have a room full of letters from men of learning..."* "[W]e find by the dates of his letters that he was corresponding at length and elaborately with the learned men of his time on technical points of scholarship, Biblical criticism..." (Froude, *The Life and Letters*, pp. 377, 394).
  - While Erasmus was in Italy he spent all of his time "devouring the libraries," states Durant. "[C]omparing two codices...for the more correct reading of some intricate passage" was his passion (Durant, p. 275; Mangan, pp. 275, 91). Erasmus states, *"It may easily be guessed how large a part of the usefulness of my work would have been lacking if my learned friends had not supplied me with manuscripts"* (Mangan, p. 241).
  - When he went to Basel to work on the printing of this Greek New Testament, he arrived "weighed down with books...and copious notes on the New Testament" (Rummel, Erika, *Erasmus's Annotations on the New Testament*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986, p. 23).
  - In fact, Erasmus' own manuscript collection was so large and valuable, it was covetously seized by customs when he left England to go to the Continent to finalize the Greek New Testament in 1514. He protested saying that "they had stolen the labours of his life." The manuscripts were returned in a few days (Froude, *The Life and Letters*, p. 169).
- only the transmission from a manuscript text, already commonly received, to a printed form, in which this text would continue to prevail for three centuries" (*The Gentile Bias and Other Essays, The Erasmus Notes on Codex 2*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980, p. 168.)
- Erasmus claimed in the preface to have consulted the oldest and best manuscripts... (Hotchkiss, Valerie and Price, David, *The Reformation of the Bible & The Bible of the Reformation*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996, p. 100). He said his text was *"solidly based"* (de Jonge, Henk J., *Novum Testamentum a Nobis Versum: The Essence of Erasmus Edition of the New Testament*, # *Journal of Theological Studies* 35, October 1984, p. 400). Erasmus suggested that he had consulted many manuscripts (*Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. III, p. 60).
  - Erasmus further verified his Greek New Testament with scripture quotations seen in the writings of early Christian writers. His Greek text is so perfect, because he spent the first fifteen years of his studies almost wholly given to translating the early Christian writers of the first few centuries after Christ. In these writings from the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th centuries, one finds evidence for the Bible's oldest readings. They usually predate, by several hundred years, the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus MSS, from which modern translations get their readings. Froben published Erasmus' work on the 'Fathers,' as a series which included, Cyprian, Irenaeus, Chrysostom, Basil, Ambrose and numerous others. Being a theologian, Erasmus knew the origin of heretical omissions. *"[I]n many places the virus still lurked of...Marcion,"* he noted (Bainton, p. 264).

The above excerpts are from [IN AWE OF THY WORD](#), an important classic book by Dr. Gail A. Riplinger. This needful book is the first and only documented history of the words of the Holy Bible. Among the many revealing chapters included in this insightful book is an excellent in-depth study of the life and works of Erasmus.

***"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not THE GOSPEL of our Lord Jesus Christ."* —2nd Thessalonians 1:8**

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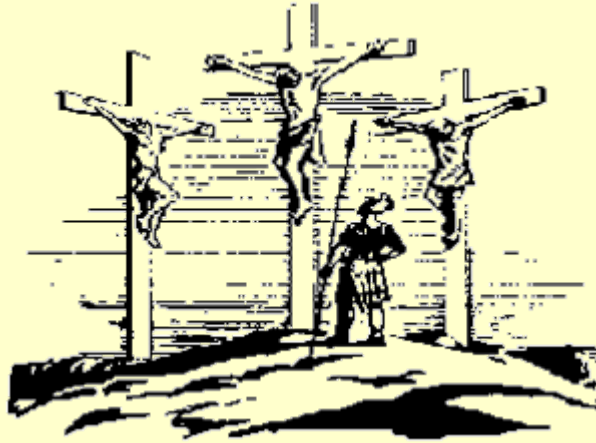


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